

**Classie on Ciel 9**  
in her dream home  
with her dream man

**Tale of 3 sisters in Ramos**  
murder case: Victim,  
suspect, witness

**Death toll in bus**  
crash in Benguet  
rises to 39

**Petron rolls back**  
gasoline price by  
P1.25 effective today

**White House, US Capitol**  
evacuated as plane  
breaches airspace



## Doc assures Erap 'bionic' knees will hold up in bed



**By Nelson F. Flores**  
ALL THOUGH Doc doesn't have enough bionic knees to support himself, Atty. General Francisco Duque III says he is confident that his knees, fortified with all-

# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS. FEARLESS VIEWS

## Defensor seeks Corpus post, calls him psychotic

**DEFENSOR** another "insane" the retired brig. gen. Victor Corpus says the pres. Defensor's Secretary Miguel Defensor is making his claim on the chairmanship of National Resources Development Corp. (NORC). Defensor said he would ask President Arroyo to appoint him. He said he would also ask the Corp. to appoint him. Defensor said he would also ask the Corp. to appoint him.

Friday, May 11, 2007 • 36 pages • Vol. 28 • No. 134

website: www.inq.net

# Now, it's BIR going after CAP

OUTRAGE DOWN UNDER

## Mistreated Fil-Aussie found in Olongapo

**By Alvin Maculan**  
PDS Central Luzon Desk

**OLONGAPO CITY**—A naturalized Australian citizen who was wrongly deported by the Australian government to the Philippines was found in a hospital bed on Thursday five years after she was reported missing.

Yvonne Alvarez, 52, who was born in Olongapo, was found in the Melbourne of Australia in Olongapo City, Olongapo, after Australian Prime Minister John Howard apologized for her deportation.

"I want to see my children," Alvarez said. Alvarez said she was in Olongapo for five years. Her two children are in Australia, according to P. Michael Smith, chairman of the Yvonne Alvarez Foundation.

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The case of Alvarez, who holds dual Philippine-Australian citizenship, has been part of a debate regarding the status of the naturalized citizens in the Philippines. Alvarez has been criticized by some for not being a naturalized citizen.

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**MISSING for five years, her mother was deported about 2001, Yvonne Alvarez, who was wrongly deported from Australia, is under the care of the Philippine of Charity.**

## Top execs charged with tax evasion

**By Armand H. Mosen**  
and Cynthia G. Bales

**THERE** seems to be an end to the problems of embattled pro-secutors from College Assessment Plan Inc. (CAP).

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) yesterday filed with the Department of Justice its complaint against the top executives of CAP and its subsidiaries for failing to pay P5.2-million in taxes from May 2000 to February 2005.

"This is troubling to us as it is misappropriating money they are entitled to," CAP said in a statement. CAP said it was not aware of the BIR's complaint.

Charged were CAP president Francisco Sotelo Jr., treasurer Alfredo Galdo and assistant treasurer Conrado Sotelo. Sotelo is president of Cap-Subsidiary Manila Place and James Corp. CAP President, James Corp. Sotelo is also president of CAP-Subsidiary Manila Place and James Corp. CAP President, James Corp. Sotelo is also president of CAP-Subsidiary Manila Place and James Corp.

The case filed with the DOJ was one of two lawsuits filed against CAP and its subsidiaries in many years.

On April 27, a group of CAP plan holders filed a case with the Manila Regional Trial Court, saying it is entitled to a return of its investment in CAP. CAP said it was not aware of the BIR's complaint.

"It is a matter of fact that no one has been reported in court yet," BIR said in a statement.

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**DECORATED.** President Arroyo confers the Order of Lakan with the rank of Don on US Ambassador Francis R. S. Sotelo during his second visit on Thursday. He has three years of duty under today.

## ENVOY'S LAST DAY Military: Cotabato no terror 'doormat'

**By Don E. Pascual**  
and Mike Dizon

**THE** MEXICO Embassy yesterday said that foreign military has been sent to Cotabato to help the military in the region.

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## Mayor still suspect in Agustin slay

**By Tereza Dizon**  
PDS Central Luzon Desk

**ORIO (PNS)** Interpol—The mayor of San Jose, Agustin, is still a suspect in the slaying of a police officer in San Jose, Agustin, on Thursday.

The case of Agustin, who holds dual Philippine-Australian citizenship, has been part of a debate regarding the status of the naturalized citizens in the Philippines. Alvarez has been criticized by some for not being a naturalized citizen.

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investigating the murder said.

The alleged last suspect that Agustin reportedly killed a few years ago was developing a strong angle in the murder, Interpol says. Interpol said that Agustin had been a victim of Mayor Agustin.

"There, according to Interpol, is a suspect in the murder of Mayor Agustin," Interpol said.

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**THE SHOWDOWN** for a public safety summit in July to help to help a constructive working among members of the standing committee support by the aid of the US. The summit will be held in San Jose, Agustin, on Thursday. The summit will be held in San Jose, Agustin, on Thursday. The summit will be held in San Jose, Agustin, on Thursday.

## Miriam hurls challenge but no one listens

**By TJ Burgos**

**IF** YOU want to offer credible evidence on the country's growing problems, you must first overcome the odds in public hearings.

challenge to representatives of major political parties and various party-list groups who are not willing to share up environmental, economic and legal on serious public safety and a strong enough against the 100-member legislative body. President Arroyo said.

Let's all sign a national declaration that we will not run for public office without the support of the community. Let's all sign a national declaration that we will not run for public office without the support of the community. Let's all sign a national declaration that we will not run for public office without the support of the community.

## OAKWOOD MUTINY 96 junior officers want to cut deal, too

**By Don E. Pascual**  
and Michael L. Dizon

**WITH** the successful plea bargain by their representatives on Wednesday, most of the 96 junior officers who accepted the Oakwood mutiny in July 2005 are seeking a similar deal with military officials.

Ninety-seven junior officers are seeking a similar deal with military officials. Ninety-seven junior officers are seeking a similar deal with military officials. Ninety-seven junior officers are seeking a similar deal with military officials.

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The military prosecutors are so far not in a position to plan for the officers.

"Starting the time of our plea bargaining agreement, they want to cut a deal with the officers, except the top leaders. We said, 'Let's not talk about a plea. We will talk about the officers first, then we will talk about a plea,'" said prosecutor Col. Arroyo.

When asked, however, whether the top leaders had a chance to cut a plea bargain, Arroyo said it was "possible." He added, "They are allowed by the law."

But then, Arroyo said he would not cut a deal with the officers. But then, Arroyo said he would not cut a deal with the officers. But then, Arroyo said he would not cut a deal with the officers.

**WEATHER FORECAST**

**PHILIPPINE** Areas of moderate to heavy rain or squalls are expected over the northern Luzon, and the southern Luzon and Visayas. The rest of the country will have moderate to heavy rain or squalls. The weather is expected to be clear and sunny.

Source: PAGASA

Second **FRONT PAGE**

See page 1 for details on the road scam

Area	Forecast	Area	Forecast
Manila	Cloudy with rain	Quezon	Cloudy with rain
Taguig	Cloudy with rain	Palawan	Cloudy with rain
Marikina	Cloudy with rain	Visayas	Cloudy with rain
Alabang	Cloudy with rain	Mindanao	Cloudy with rain
Alabang	Cloudy with rain	Alabang	Cloudy with rain
Alabang	Cloudy with rain	Alabang	Cloudy with rain

# PMA alumni bare road scam

## GMA vows returns from fiscal reforms

By Christine O. Asensio,  
Michael G. Sison and TJ Bergeles

**MANILA**—Mapping its way to a presidential campaign, the "opposition" front has the fiscal reform measures that the government has not been the new Vice added to its list, which it "intended to do."

The President approved reform that the list of his administration reforms, the "Vice" bill, finally got through after the House ended a 10-day filibuster.

The House has ended the bill, however, in the Senate, which was expected to pass it in 2007. The bill for the government is the remaining months of the year and P100 billion more.

Pres. Arroyo's House would add the bill to the remaining months of the year and P100 billion more.

Last night with the passage of the bill to the House, we have finally legislation to put our fiscal house in order, including the bill on anti-trust and oligopoly," Pres. Arroyo said in a speech at the

House of Representatives.

He Arroyo said under the reform measures, but administration had passed a "fiscally responsible" national budget, started to open up the electricity power sector and passed a law that would encourage companies to open up their collection.

The measures, the President said, were meant to achieve a balanced budget for the government by the end of the year in 2007 as well as end the poor people's plight.

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"I assure you people that the measures in the implementation of the fiscal reform measures will be carried out," Pres. Arroyo said.

By Leticia K. Salazar

**PHILIPPINE** Military Academy about inheriting to Class '90 have sought to stop a foreign-funded Department of Public Works and Highways road project allegedly overpriced by over P200 million.

PMA (Philippine Military Academy), whose members are military officers and police officers, yesterday filed a petition with the Supreme Court to nullify the P200-million bid awarded to the P200-million Road Project to Class Road and Bridge Corp. in 2004.

In a decision, the government's approved budget for the project, which was the winning bid for the project and rehabilitation of the Cavendish road, was set at P181.7 million.

The P200-million bid was awarded to the Cavendish Road Project to Class Road and Bridge Corp. in 2004.

The project is funded with a loan from the Japan Road for International Corporation.

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## COMING AND GOING

## DOH men lament Dayrit exit, are wary of Duque

By Christine V. Rivera

OFFICIALS and employees of the Department of Health are lamenting the departure of Secretary Manuel Dayrit, while at the same time remaining puzzled about his successor, Dr. Francisco Duque III.

Not a few were convinced that Duque, president of Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth), got the post because of his connections to President Macapagal-Arroyo's victory in last year's elections.

PhilHealth, under Duque, distributed at least four million health cards bearing My Arroyo's picture to poor Filipines during the campaign.

One DOH employee yesterday said the "political accommodation" became obvious when Malabon-based Duque's appointment the day after Dayrit formally announced his resignation at a press conference. Dayrit will step down on May 31.

"Doesn't the President always take a long time to appoint replacements?" the employee pointed out in an interview with the Inquirer. "How come in Secretary Dayrit's case, the found a successor in just a day?"

## Leaked!

There were also suspicions that Malabon had internally leaked Dayrit's supposed resignation for April 5 to expedite his departure and have him in succession without a hitch.

Dayrit was attending an international health conference in Cairo, Egypt, when another newspaper, citing anonymous sources, reported that he had resigned. One reason mentioned was his appointment to the World Health Organization Commission on the Social Determinants of Health.

At a press conference the day after he arrived in Manila, Dayrit denied that he was resigning to concentrate on the WHO job. Nor was he quitting to take care of his wife who had breast cancer but had long been cured.

Until yesterday, Dayrit refused to dignify suggestions that the President's political accommodation of Duque had cost him his job.

"Dr. [Duque] was appointed by the President," he told reporters.

On Tuesday, Dayrit told the President "that my performance" had the quality of a new "oil drill," he has called when they talked on the phone in August 2003.

"Like in football, the coach has a vision for the team," Dayrit said in PUSpin. "Even if you're a good player, as long as the coach wants to change the way he runs his team, he can always trade you."

DOH employees are preparing an emotional send-off for Dayrit on his last day in office on May 31. Duque will formally take his place

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# Doc tells Erap 'bionic' knees OK

By Joseph L. ...

let to see him.  
Dr. Christopher Wong, coordinator of orthopedic surgery at the Stanford University Medical Center and Erap's knee surgeon, said surgeons previously during a press conference at Club Filipino that the knee replacement surgery was not as simple as it seemed.

## Only natural

"The question came up during our discussion. It is only natural for people, whether made or human, to be

concerned for their life as an important part of life and I could have been so sure in the few months after the surgery," Wong, who is based in California, said.

"In fact, we can only tell our patients what to do," Wong said after some reporters asked him if the knee replacement was still a natural process.

## Out of danger

Now, at the same time, and though there was still some pain in his knee, he said he was monitoring Erap's progress "to make sure that there are no major side effects."

"It is now out of danger," Wong added.

Wong also said Erap's knee surgery was done after he's under a strict diet and exercise while facing anti-trust charges filed by the government, in a very good location for his patient to recuperate.

"It is fully and quickly by itself with minimal intervention," Wong said, adding that he had just visited Erap.

## Doctor to VP's

He also said that cardiac equipment had been set up in one of the rooms of the clinic.



Wong (left) says that Dr. Christopher Wong for his knee replacement surgery during a press conference at Club Filipino on Thursday. (AP Wirephoto)



Now he does knee replacement surgery in Manila, among them Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Co. (Merry Pangilinan/Philstar photo for the country press)

**RECOVERING** from knee replacement surgery early this year at the Hong Kong, China, hospital, former President Erap was seen walking in 1999 at a press conference.

## Defensor seeks ...

By Joseph L. ...

due to a highly irregular deal for the government's engine replacement program (ERP).

## No credibility

"The ERPC is a very powerful agency, but it cannot be taken as a source of information as it is not a government agency," Defensor said. "I don't know about the other companies, but Corpus has no credibility with the agency. This is really pathetic."

Defensor said in a press conference that he was not going to approve anything because his job is clear as is possible.

The MCB was approved, with conditions, during that meeting and not in February as the ERPC earlier announced, Defensor said.

A copy of the contract from the MCB to the ERPC was not signed by the ERPC, but it was signed by the MCB, Defensor said.

Defensor said he would review the ERPC when he returns from his trip to the United States and discuss the details with the other board members.

He said that Corpus should come out and "say his piece" in the matter when he returns.

While he will not be a board member of ERPC, Defensor said he would not assume the ERPC chairmanship until the President appoints someone who will effectively oversee the entire ERP program.

The ERPC Secretary is currently chair of the ERPC board, but Corpus was appointed as the ERPC Secretary.

Defensor said he would review the ERPC when he returns from his trip to the United States and discuss the details with the other board members.

"While I was not chair, I did not assume it. I didn't know what was happening there. I was not involved in the ERPC-ERPC deal," Defensor said.

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## "My only choice was Assumption College."

Simple President Franklin Delano

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# The WORLD

Editor: Lawrence B. Geron

## UK, French officials linked to oil scandal

LONDON—A controversial British lawmaker named by a US Congress panel as receiving huge sums from oil trade analysis former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's regime angrily rejected the charges Thursday as "a big lie."

George Galloway, who set up his own left-wing Respect party after being expelled from the Labour Party of Prime Minister Tony Blair over the Iraq war, was named that damages from a British newspaper last year after it made similar allegations.

"This is a very old allegation. It's the allegation that led the Daily Telegraph to speculate about

links that month," Galloway told BBC radio.

A probe by the Permanent Joint Intelligence Commission on Investigations said earlier Thursday it had evidence that Iraq gave Galloway 20 million barrels of oil in allocations under the Saddam-era UN Oil-for-Food program.

The committee said Charles Dupuis, a conservative former



GALLOWAY campaigning in east London on polling day May 5. —

French law for minister also received 11 million barrels.

Galloway called the investigation "a very peculiar kind of scam," saying its members had not contacted him, even when he reportedly requested a hearing.

Asked why he had been named, Galloway, 50, claimed he was being targeted for opposing the Iraq war.

"This is George (FO) Blair's Republican Party committee seeking to smear those who stood against their policy on war with Iraq and who have been persecuted," he said.

Galloway was a prominent critic of US sanctions against Saddam as well as the US-led, British-backed war of March 2003 to oust him.

In 1994, he was fined during a visit to Baghdad telling Saddam: "I salute your courage, your strength, your indefatigability." However, Galloway has claimed he was entering to the Iraqi people and that he despised the regime.

Galloway was locked out of Labour for his vehement opposition to the Iraq war, but got his revenge on Blair by winning a major

sport in last week's British general election.

Galloway accused Tony King, a Blair loyalist who backed the war, of winning her last London seat by appealing to the area's large Muslim population, many of whom were unhappy with the conflict.

Their electoral battle was perhaps the most bitter of the whole election, with King, who is half Jewish, accusing Respect activists of spreading word of her ethnic background to hurt her chances, a charge Galloway's officials vehemently denied. —



**DAY, MAY 13, 2005**

# area

**WASHINGTON—**

Fighter jets scrambled over Washington on Wednesday when a plane breached restricted air space prompting the evacuation of the White House and the US Congress amid fears of a Sept. 11-style attack, but the president was not told until he finished a bicycle ride.

The light private Cessna had ignored calls from air traffic controllers and entered the restricted air zone around Washington, coming within 5 km of the White House before turning away, authorities said.

## Fighter jets

The plane's approach sent two F-16 fighter jets into the air over the US capital and thousands of staff and tourists into the streets outside the White House, Capitol building and Supreme Court in an urgent evacuation.

The US Customs service also scrambled Black Hawk helicopters during the alert, which the White House characterized as the most serious since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks by hijacked airliners on New York and Washington.

But President George W. Bush was on a bicycle ride at a suburban wildlife preserve in nearby Maryland at the time and was not told about the crisis until the end of his bike ride and some 40 minutes after the "all-clear" was given.

Vice President Dick Cheney who was at the White House at the time was quickly evacuated, White House spokesperson Scott McClellan said, and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was told about the incident just before noon, around the time it happened.

## Accidental

Homeland Security Department officials said the Secret Service determined the air intrusion appeared to be accidental and no charges would be filed against the two men on board.

First lady Laura Bush and former first lady Nancy Reagan, who was visiting, were rushed to a secure location on the White House grounds, McClellan said.

"A determination was made that the threat posed no danger to the president since he was at an off-site location, and protocols were in place to protect people in the area of the threat," McClellan said.

"Those protocols did not require any presidential authority."

"Given such circumstances and the fact that the plane turned away from the White House, the decision was made to inform the president upon conclusion of his bike ride," McClellan added.

The two fighters, which scrambled from nearby Andrews Air Force base, intercepted the Cessna and fired four flares to get the pilot's attention before escorting the plane to nearby Frederick, Maryland, officials said.

**Reuters**



# US envoy confirms N. Korea A-bomb test in the works as tensions heighten

SEOUL—A US envoy confirmed Wednesday that North Korea had begun preparations for a nuclear test as the Socialist state claimed it had taken a key step toward the manufacture of more atomic bombs.

North Korea has been reported to have an array of eight nuclear weapons according to some estimates but has never tested one so far.

US Ambassador to Japan Thomas Schwarz, speaking on the occasion of his visit to the United States, said that it could soon change.

"I believe they have taken some preparatory steps," the newly appointed envoy was quoted as saying in Tokyo at a meeting with a Japanese media delegation.

Schwarz is the first US official to go on record as saying that a nuclear test could be in the works, after announced officials were quoted in the New York Times last week.

According to satellite and other intelligence data from official sources, Pyongyang is building a new facility and filling in a tunnel, their position to a potential underground test.

Schwarz believed there was a "high probability" of a nuclear test, according to a Japanese official.

South Korean officials have been skeptical about the reports that North Korea was preparing a test, but US intelligence officials have said they have no doubts.

US and South Korean intelligence agencies have been watching the central state for some 15 years and officials in Seoul said it was very unlikely that they had nuclear devices.

signs not received intelligence from the State of States that would indicate test progress.

In a separate development Wednesday, North Korea said that it had completed an overhaul of its nuclear power plant, a move that would allow it to produce enough plutonium for about half a dozen bombs.

North Korea said that the reactor had been shut down to avoid the space test and ensure it is safe.

"The reactor field of the DPRK (North Korea) has successfully finished the overhaul of 8,000 square feet and will be in the DPRK (North Korea) plant nuclear plant in the reactor."

North Korea said that the reactor had been shut down to avoid the space test and ensure it is safe.

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joint security" a foreign security spokesman was quoted as saying by the United States Coast Guard Agency.

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## Grenade at Bush rally 'not armed'

THIRTEEN—American and US security officials launched an investigation Wednesday after a hand-grenade was found near the arrival stage where US President George W. Bush and his wife, Laura, were to arrive.

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# Calabarzon closes in on NCR as Borja, Chavez rule

By Marc Anthony Reyes

**BUENOS AIRES**—Calabarzon seemed to accept being perceived as the new leader National Capital Region as it won the 2004 National Capital Region Cup in basketball. Capital Region won the cup for the first time in its history. The team, coached by former national coach Nito Alvarez, won the cup by defeating the NCR team, coached by former national coach Nito Alvarez, in a final game held at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex. The game was held on May 12, 2004, at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex. The game was held on May 12, 2004, at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex. The game was held on May 12, 2004, at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Calabarzon's victory was a surprise to many, as the team had only won the cup once before in 1991. The team's success was attributed to the coaching of Nito Alvarez, who was named coach of the year. The team's success was attributed to the coaching of Nito Alvarez, who was named coach of the year. The team's success was attributed to the coaching of Nito Alvarez, who was named coach of the year.



GOLD medalist Ram Edulador of Calabarzon in action.

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# Wizards find gem; HC scores

By Henry B. Castillo

**MANILA**—In a move that surprised many, the Wizards of the Coast have announced that they will be moving to the Philippines. The move is expected to be completed by the end of the year. The move is expected to be completed by the end of the year. The move is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

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## Corrales wins world crown via a sleepwalk

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

By Henry B. Castillo

MANILA

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**German in Boracay slays says he's home**

By Nicole E. Burgos Jr.  
The Philippine Inquirer

**CEBU** — A German tourist who was slaying a woman in Boracay last week, saying he was home.

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**Question of the Week**

More than 50 journalists have been killed in the Philippines since 1986. The Committee to Protect Journalists has identified the Philippines as "the most murderous country for journalists," followed by Iraq, Colombia, Bangladesh and Russia. What should be done to stop the killings?

Answers of at least 20 words are published in Sunday's InquestBox and next week in "Inquest Blog".

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Name/Agency/Message.

0905-040-0788 (InquestBox) or 0905-040-0789 (InquestBlog)

Minimum of 20 words required.

Answers should be submitted by 11:59 PM on Sunday.

Answers should be submitted by 11:59 PM on Sunday.















## DRIVE INTENSIFIED

## Fake name brand shoe

By Lola B. Salaverria

ONE HUNDRED million pesos worth of rubber shoes carrying fake name brand labels were seized by Bureau of Customs (BOC) agents during a raid at a Pasay City building the other day.

The shoes, which came mostly from China, carried the names of expensive brands like Nike, adidas, Diesel, Reebok, Converse and World Balance, but were sold for just a tenth of the original price.

BOC Commissioner Alberto Lina issued a warrant of seizure and detention for the counterfeit items after the owners of the goods failed to produce importation papers and receipts for tax and duties payments.

The shoes, kept in 52 stalls inside a five-story building along Capt. Ambo Street, Pasay City, were discovered after BOC agents conducted surveillance operations in the area.

Customs Deputy Commissioner Celso Templo said the BOC is strengthening its drive against Intellectual Property Rights

(IPR) law violators because the United States wants the Philippines to vigorously implement the law before it agrees to remove the country from its watch list.

To show the BOC's sincerity in going after IPR violators and smugglers, Templo said charges would be filed against the owners of the fake goods. The names of the owners and the persons involved in the illegal shipment were withheld pending further investigation and the filing of charges against them.

The bureau had also

been conducting a drive against smuggled and counterfeit goods following complaints from manufacturers of original brands who were losing heavily in the face of competition from fake products.

Major Butch Tibayan of the customs police said it was easy to tell the counterfeit from the original because the former was of inferior quality.

Customs agents earlier seized P10 million worth of shoes carrying fake Reebok labels from another warehouse in Pasay City.

## Passport services in Makati

By Terra V. Quismundo

NEED a passport or want to renew your old one?

Visit the Makati City Hall tomorrow when it opens its doors to applicants. The service is aimed at giving the public an alternative venue to secure a passport.

From 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., the city government will host personnel from the Department of Foreign Affairs who will offer mobile passport services for those living in and out of the city at the ground floor of the new Makati City Hall building.

"We have been doing this for five years now as a public service. We serve an average of 1,500 residents every year," said city administrator Nicanor Santiago Jr.

City Hall gives this service twice a year: once in May and in November, the birth month of Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay.

The passports are redeemed one week later at the Makati City Hall.

## Muntinlupa 'trackers' to monitor drug pushers

By Fran Katigbak

DRUG pushers may not have an easy time plying their trade in Muntinlupa City once barangay officials finish a training program aimed at tracking them down swiftly and effectively.

Organized by the

Drug Abuse and Prevention Office, headed by Chito Valerio, the training is one feature of a tracker system that monitors and documents drug cases in the city.

The two-day program includes seminars on surveillance and under-

cover investigation, handling evidence, and writing investigation reports, as well as lectures on the legal aspect of drug cases.

Resource persons for the training include city prosecutors and officers of the Philippine National Police.

## Quezon City worker dies defending pet monkey

By DJ Yap

A CONSTRUCTION worker yesterday tried to defend his pet monkey from a co-worker who wanted to harm the animal, but lost his life in the process.

Eduardo Patugalan, 28, was having a drink early yesterday morning with Joel Zamora at Ascension Road, Barangay Lagro, Novaliches, Quezon City

when Zamora suddenly tried to stab the victim's monkey with a bladed weapon, police said.

Patugalan tried to stop Zamora, 20, from hurting his pet, but the latter only got ticked.

After a heated argument, Zamora grabbed his weapon and stabbed Patugalan repeatedly, police added.

The victim was rushed

to the hospital, but died soon after. The suspect is still at large.

It was not immediately clear what happened to Patugalan's monkey.

At about the same time, Avelino Aycardo and Joel Cariño were gunned down by still unidentified assailants in Forest Hill Subdivision, Barangay Gulod, Novaliches.



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# Business

See our special business section for more information on page B2

Read our special business section for more information on page B2

Editor: Basil G. Heredia  
Assistant Editor: Carlos S. Narula

## Farm sector growth slows to 0.55%

By Christine A. Gaydos

THE AGRICULTURE sector, which accounts for a fifth of the country's gross domestic product, grew by a steady 0.50 percent in the first quarter due to disruptions from typhoons last year followed by a dry spell in early 2005, the government said yesterday.

The expansion was slower than the 1.35 percent growth in the last quarter of 2004, when a series of typhoons damaged crops, and the 7.9 percent recorded in the first quarter last year. The country's major crops include

primary agricultural products, such as rice, sugarcane and tropical fruit.

Despite the bad year, however, Gap said there was enough time to recover and post 0.4 percent growth in farm sector output by the end of the year.

"We will maintain our growth targets, including the rice production goal of 11.2 million metric tons," he said.

Gap is confident the country can still catch up in the second semester, when crop harvests are

usually bigger.

According to the agriculture department, the crop sector, which accounts for nearly half of the agricultural output, posted a 3 percent decline in production in the first quarter. Paddy production was down 2 percent while corn output dropped 14 percent.

The government said earlier that it expected GDP to have grown a seasonally adjusted 0.1 percent in the first quarter from the previous three months as the economy continued to feel the im-

pact of a weak agricultural sector.

The economy expanded 0.6 percent in the fourth quarter of 2004 from the third quarter, its slowest pace in three years.

Weak reports are also weighing on overall growth. The government said on Wednesday that expansion fell 0.4 percent in March, bringing first-quarter output growth to a modest 0.6 percent from a prior quarter.

"The agriculture sector may be a drag for this year in terms of the headline numbers, but where

there is resilience is the services sector due to the strong tourism flow," said Long Jang Nien, regional economist at Citibank Securities in Singapore.

Revenues from tourism rose 10 percent in the first quarter last year to \$1.9 billion, the highest in more than three decades. The central bank expects a rise of 10.5 percent this year to \$2.4 billion.

The government has set a GDP growth target of 5.3 to 6.5 percent this year, but economists

## US DOJ ends investigation of RP telcos

By Carlos S. Narula

THE UNITED States Department of Justice is no longer pursuing an anti-trust suit it was building against Philippine telecommunications companies.

A settlement of the Justice Department's suit, said the DOJ, had terminated a two-year-old grand jury investigation of the local carriers. The probe was aimed at determining whether Philippine telcos behaved as a cartel when they raised their rates in 2002.

Regional chief prosecutor Ronald Peltusa said the "positive result" was related to the company by its US-based parent, Verizon Wireless.

"The DOJ advised the Department that the department was withdrawing its two-year-old grand jury investigation of the telecommunications charges by Verizon and other Philippine carriers without taking any action," according to a statement issued by Peltusa.

Revisions of other local carriers and national government officials, however, refused to comment on the report, saying they have nothing to



### Stocks end lower

Stocks ended lower as investors reacted to a third straight session of higher oil prices. Philippine stocks ended lower as investors reacted to a third straight session of higher oil prices.

The benchmark PSE composite index closed down 0.38 percent, or 0.1 percent, at 1,011.75, after dropping 0.6 percent the previous day.

Following a decline in the index to its 50th lowest in 1.8 percent over the past three months.

The most contributors to the decline were declines in Philippine Long Distance Telephone, which fell 1.7 percent to P1.40, and Asia Star, which fell 1.2 percent to P1.00.

The commercial-industrial, all shares, property, and all subsectors ended lower. The banks and financial services, including such institutions, closed higher.

Investment-grade papers (IG) to 20, while IG stocks were unchanged. Partly offsetting the index's decline was the performance of the banks, which rose 1.4 percent to P1.00.











## BUSINESS

February 2005

$$S_{n+1} = S_n + \frac{1}{n+1} \quad S_1 = 1$$

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All participants are required to attend the leveling session on May 20 (Friday) & 21 (Saturday).

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## Disclosures

**CHIMENET (PINK)** *Commercial Bank Corp.* will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 21, 3 p.m., at the 10th, Tower One & Exchange Place, Ayala Triangle, Ayala Fwy. cor. Procter & Gamble, Makati City.

**FILETYPE** Long Beach: Stephen Co. claimed that its board chair, Manuel S. Fongman, had purchased 3,333 shares of FLYS at \$10 on May 10.

**WIRELESS** Holdings Inc. said 10.3 million Digital Telecommunications Radio, Inc. shares for \$13 million last April. Completed by April 1, 2000. **WTS Research**

## CONCLUSIONS

Date	ISSN	Item	Subject	Price
Year		Speculated	Unspec.	Estimated
United States	Online	5,100.00	10,000.00	15,000.00
United Kingdom	Online	3,000.00	5,000.00	7,000.00
United Kingdom	Printed	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Hong Kong	Online	9,000.00	5,000.00	13,000.00
Japan	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Canada	Online	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Germany	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Italy	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Spain	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
France	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Sweden	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Switzerland	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Belgium	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Denmark	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Norway	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Finland	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Portugal	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Greece	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Spain	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Italy	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
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Sweden	Online	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
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# US firm moves to strengthen call center unit in RP

By Ronald W. Domingue

SPCDA Corp., one of the largest call center companies in the country, yesterday said it had formed a "high-profile" advisory board in an effort to strengthen its Philippine operations.

The company, based in the United States, said the board will be composed of Philippine and American executives of companies based in Singapore and the United States, with the goal of strengthening its Philippine operations and increasing its market share in the Philippines.

The advisory board will be headed by the company's president and chief executive officer, and will include representatives of the Philippine and American governments, as well as executives of major Philippine and American companies.

The company said the board will be responsible for providing advice and guidance on all matters relating to the company's operations in the Philippines, including regulatory issues, market development, and human resources.

The company said the board will be formed by the end of the year, and will meet regularly to discuss the company's operations in the Philippines.

The company said the board will be a "high-profile" advisory board, and will include representatives of the Philippine and American governments, as well as executives of major Philippine and American companies.

and general manager of SPCDA Philippines, Lydia Balasubramanian, president and board member of the first Eastern University, Robert Antonio, former Eastern University president, and from the American side, Jonathan B. Bower, president and managing partner of Bower & Co. Capital, which invests in technology and high-tech companies.

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# Navy property dev't to boost construction sector, says Asap

THE ASSOCIATION of Bank Architects of the Philippines (Asap) said the Philippine Navy's plan to transform a 64.7-hectare property in the Alibon area into a mixed-use development would "boost the property and construction sectors."

Asap director for the Philippines, Dr. Carlos A. de la Cruz, recently announced by Navy Chief of Staff Admiral Emilio Dela Cruz, would further enhance "the capability of and expand the role of the Navy leadership for its development to transform an idle facility into a revenue-generating asset."

The project will involve the development of commercial centers and the construction of new housing for Navy personnel.

The Navy earlier announced that the results for a major developer for the 64.7-hectare property, which also hosts the 18th Navy garrison, had already started.

Dr. de la Cruz said "major development projects of this size are always a boost to the construction sector."

He said the Navy's intention "to ease to attract the interest of property developers and construction industry leaders."

Dr. de la Cruz said the project "has been a privilege for other branches of service in the Armed Forces." He said the construction of military and civilian housing projects and commercial sites "will help push the Philippines construction program to new heights."

He added that the Navy may be seeking an important provision from which to hope some of the Navy's projects could be used.

The Navy said the Navy was planning to build some 4,000 new housing units for its military personnel and officers on a 22-hectare portion of the property.

Planning for the construction of the units will come from a planned commercial development of the remaining 22-hectare portion by a prospective developer.

According to the general plan for the commercial development, many of the units will be used to help the Navy's development program, he added.

# AUB profit up 210% in Q1

AUB United Bank (AUB), a medium-sized commercial bank, posted a net income of P200 million in the first quarter of 2006.

The first quarter profit was 210 percent higher than the P50 million recorded in the same period last year.

The net profit translated to an annualized return on equity of 34.01 percent, the highest among local commercial and consumer banks for the period.

AUB's strong income performance for the first three months of the year was largely due to substantial gains from trading of securities, amounting to P171 million and a 63 percent increase in fee-based income. The bank had also prudently managed its income differential income, which grew by 18 percent to P200 million from P171 million in the first quarter of 2005.

Total assets of the bank as of March 31, 2006 stood at P18 billion, up by 1.5 percent from its average level of P18 billion. Total deposits grew by 11.5 percent from P16.1 billion to P17.1 billion, primarily driven by a 40 percent increase in low-cost demand deposits.

As of March of this year, AUB United Bank posted one of the lowest non-performing loan ratio at 0.02 percent, which is way below the industry average of 11.41 percent, a clear indication of well-managed bank's business practices.

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# LIFE STYLE

● TUESDAY FITNESS ● WEDNESDAY ISU ● THURSDAY FOOD ● FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY

## Itsy-bitsy-teeny-weeney

A contest that comes full with a Q&A portion but skimps on the clothes.

BYRONAL  
Luna,  
Bartolome  
Dennis



YETISUHI last body theme contest

Text by Alex Y. Noyes  
Photo by Rudy Espinoza

IN A CROWDED field of good-looking guys with rippling abs and gorgeous girls with ample cleavage, the top male and female winners in the recent Modeling Bikini Summer of the Angeles City contest weren't exactly racy, toned or "piled" than most of the other contestants.

After a three-hour show that exposed 20 young local bodies (16 males and 14 females) in various stages of nudity—and lots of depth—bikinis, body massages, laser hair removal and body shaping treatments, the winners were crowned.

To be fair to the contestants, many of whom came from separate schools, the Q&A portion revealed interestingly other areas of their careers, such as their plans to become actresses or models, and their future plans.

Contest winner Luna, 21, who is a

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IMPROMPTU last body theme contest



BLANK last body theme contest



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# LIFESTYLE

## The score on weight-loss supplements

Please consult your doctor before drinking any of the supplements I feature today, to make sure you use them properly and get the right results



**HEALTH Express**  
Green Tea Extract



**HERBALIFE Body**  
Conditioning Cream



**SAPIO Thermal Night Time Formula**

**A** COUSIN sleep of green, natural, weight-loss supplements are a new family topic. I sign the readers of this article to please consult your doctor before drinking any of the supplements I feature today.

In my case, a visit to an endocrinologist made me aware that I wasn't too far off anything I was doing. I mentioned a lot and confirmed my weight loss was still going well.

uncontrollably because of a thyroid problem. Medication helped me lose the extra 25 pounds I was carrying around. I still fluctuate every so often but I am glad that upon leaving the problem I am able to keep things under control. So how important seeing a doctor is?

This article was born when I raised my supplement score. Health Express (HE) is still my go-to weight-loss supplement and asked them what their most recent best seller was. Their top five is Lipolipol, Glutathione, Green tea extract and Garcinia HBA. These are of use for weight-loss purposes and they have some side effects as well as the ones mentioned.

HE Green tea extract tablets (900mg) are capsules—in the US, they called

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